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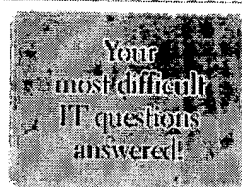
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telematics

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Telematics is the blending of computers and wireless telecommunications technologies, ostensibly with the goal of efficiently conveying information over vast networks to improve a host of business functions or government-related public services. The most notable example of telematics may be the Internet itself, since it depends on a number of computer networks connected

globally through telecommunication backbones.

The term has evolved to refer to automobile systems that combine global positioning satellite (GPS) tracking and other wireless communications for automatic roadside assistance and remote diagnostics. General Motors Corp. first popularized automotive telematics with its OnStar system.

Major automakers are equipping new prototype vehicles with wireless-based services controlled by voice commands. This kind of telematics could enable motorists to perform a variety of wireless functions such as accessing the Internet, receiving or sending e-mail, downloading digital audio and video files, or obtaining "smart" transportation information.

The telematics industry is not limited to automotive applications. Other applications are being studied or developed for monitoring water and air pollution, for medical informatics and health care, and for distance learning. Many European countries are developing uniform policies to integrate telematics applications into government, business and education.

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